



## **CIEL II SATELLITE SUCCESSFULLY LAUNCHED FROM BAIKONUR COSMODROME**

### **ILS PROTON M BREEZE M PERFORMS PERFECTLY**

December 11, 2008 – Ottawa, Canada and Moscow, Russia – The Ciel Satellite Group today announced that its Ciel II communications satellite roared into space onboard an International Launch Services (ILS) Proton M/Breeze M launch vehicle from the Baikonur Cosmodrome in Kazakhstan at 13:43:00 UTC/GMT/8:43 a.m. EST Wednesday. The Ciel II communications satellite will be providing high definition television services into the North American market; the anchor customer is DISH Network Corporation.

After nine hours and twelve minutes, the spacecraft separated from the Breeze M upper stage and was placed into geostationary transfer orbit today. Approximately one minute later, the satellite sent an initial signal which was received at the Thales Alenia Space Spacecraft Operations Centre in Cannes, France (22:56 UTC/GMT/5:56 p.m. EST).

Brian Neill, Chairman of the Ciel Satellite Group, said, “Last evening’s launch of Ciel II is a keystone event in the foundation of Ciel, Canada’s newest satellite operating company. Now that the spacecraft has delivered an initial signal, Ciel, investors, and our customer, DISH Network, can look forward to Ciel II’s operation early next year.” He continued, “The successful launch of Ciel II is the culmination of a complex and highly specialized sequence of tasks that fully exercised a remarkable team of experts from SES AMERICOM, Thales Alenia Space, SES Engineering, and ILS -- from beginning to end, the mission took 33 months. Let me thank them now for a job well done!”

Blaise Jaeger, Executive Vice President Telecommunication of Thales Alenia Space said, “Ciel II was a great challenge, allowing TAS to fully exploit the potential of the Spacebus 4000 platform with a complex payload of regional and spot beams for Ciel and its customer, DISH Network.” He continued, “Our relationship with the SES family has been successful for more than a decade, we eagerly await our next assignment.”

Frank McKenna, President of International Launch Services, said, “I would like to thank Ciel and SES for placing their confidence and trust in ILS and the Proton Breeze M. We entered into this launch contract in February of last year and set the launch for December 2008; this supports ILS long-standing commitment to precise, on-time delivery for our customers. Ciel II is the 16th satellite that ILS has launched for the SES family, a successful, on-going collaboration that spans more than a dozen years.”

### **About Ciel II**

Built by Thales Alenia Space, Ciel II is the largest Spacebus class spacecraft ever built, weighing 5,592 kg at launch; Ciel II is expected to operate for at least 15 years. The new BSS spacecraft will be capable of serving all regions of Canada visible from 129 degrees West, as well as the larger North American market; the design was closely coordinated with DISH Network Corporation, a primary customer for the new satellite. The Ciel Satellite Group was awarded the license for 129 degrees West from Industry Canada in October 2004. Ciel II will be operated from the new Satellite Operations Centre at SED Systems located in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada.

The Ciel II satellite is designed to provide 10.6 kilowatts of power to the communications payload at end of life, which consists of 32 Ku-band transponders. The all Ku-band BSS satellite features high frequency re-use and both regional and spot beams. The designated mission of Ciel II is to expand the bandwidth resources needed to increase the number of high definition and other TV services offered by broadcasters throughout North America.

### **About Thales Alenia Space**

European leader in satellite systems and a major player in orbital infrastructures, Thales Alenia Space is a joint venture between Thales (67%) and Finmeccanica (33%). Thales Alenia Space and Telespazio embody the two groups' "Space Alliance". Thales Alenia Space sets the global standard in solutions for space telecoms, radar and optical Earth observation, defense and security, navigation and science. The company has a total of 7,200 employees and 11 industrial sites, with design and manufacturing facilities in France, Italy, Spain and Belgium. [www.thalesaleniaspace.com](http://www.thalesaleniaspace.com)

### **About ILS and Khrunichev**

ILS provides satellite customers with a complete array of services and support, from contract signing through mission management and on-orbit delivery. ILS has exclusive rights to market the Proton vehicle to commercial satellite operators worldwide. ILS is a U.S. company headquartered in Reston, Va., near Washington, D.C. For more information, visit [www.ilslaunch.com](http://www.ilslaunch.com).

Khrunichev, which holds the majority interest in ILS, is one of the cornerstones of the Russian space industry. Khrunichev manufactures the Proton system and is developing the Angara launch system. The Proton launches from facilities at the Baikonur Cosmodrome in Kazakhstan, and has a heritage of 340 missions since 1965. Khrunichev includes among its branches a number of key manufacturers of launch vehicle and spacecraft components in Moscow and in other cities of the Russian Federation. For more information, visit [www.khrunichev.ru](http://www.khrunichev.ru).

### **About DISH Network Corporation**

DISH Network Corporation (Nasdaq: DISH), the nation's third largest pay-TV provider and the leader in digital television, provides approximately 13.78 million satellite TV customers as of Sept. 30, 2008 with industry-leading customer satisfaction which has surpassed major cable TV providers for eight consecutive years. DISH Network also provides customers with award-winning HD and DVR technology including the ViP@722 HD DVR, which received the Editors' Choice awards from both CNET and PC Magazine. In addition, subscribers enjoy access to hundreds of video and audio channels, the most International channels in the U.S., industry-leading Interactive TV applications, Latino programming, and the best sports and movies in HD. DISH Network offers a variety of

package and price options including the lowest all-digital price in America, the DishDVR Advantage Package, high-speed Internet service, and a free upgrade to the best HD DVR in the industry. DISH Network is included in the Nasdaq-100 Index (NDX) and is a Fortune 300 company. Visit [www.dishnetwork.com](http://www.dishnetwork.com) or call 1-800-333-DISH (3474) for more information.

**About Ciel Satellite**

Ciel is a Canadian owned and controlled organization supported by a strong combination of partners, including: Borealis Infrastructure (part of the OMERS Pension Plan's group of companies); Canadian satellite pioneer Brian Neill; and SES AMERICOM, an SES S.A. Company (Euronext Paris and Luxembourg Stock Exchange: SESG), a worldwide leader in the satellite industry.

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For further information please contact:

Scott Gibson +1-613-599-4400 or 416-464-9264; [scott.gibson@cielsatellite.ca](mailto:scott.gibson@cielsatellite.ca)